

III. Remarks

Claims 4, 8, 11, 12 and 14-19 are pending herein.

Claims 1-3, 5-7, 9, 10, 13 and 20-26 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claims 4, 8, 11, 14 and 15 have been amended.

Claims 12 and 16-19 have been maintained in their original form.

Reconsideration of claims 4, 8, 11, 12 and 14-19 in light of these amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Objected-To Claims

Claims 4, 8, 11, 12 and 14-19 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim.

Claim 4 has been rewritten in independent form and includes all of the limitations of canceled base claim 1. Claim 8 has been rewritten in independent form and includes all of the limitations of canceled base claim 1 and canceled intervening claim 5. Claim 11 has been rewritten in independent form and includes all of the limitations of canceled base claim 1 and canceled intervening claims 9 and 10. Claim 14 has been rewritten in independent form and includes all of the limitations of canceled base claim 1 and canceled intervening claim 13. Claim 15 has been rewritten in independent form and includes all of the limitations of canceled base claim 1.

As claims 4, 8, 11, 14 and 15 have been placed in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims from which they depended, respectively, it is respectfully requested that the objection to claims 4, 8, 11, 14 and 15 be withdrawn.

Claims 12 and 16-19 depend from and include the subject matter of independent claims 11 and 15, respectively. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the objection to claims 12 and 16-19 be withdrawn.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 1, 3 and 5

Claims 1, 3 and 5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 4,047,255 to Kiefer ("Kiefer"). Claims 1, 3 and 5 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and this rejection is therefore moot.

Claims 20 and 24

Claims 20 and 24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Pat. Pub. No. JP 2001-233289. Claims 20 and 24 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and this rejection is therefore moot.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1 and 2

Claims 1 and 2 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Japanese Pat. Pub. No. JP 2001-233289 in view of U.S. Pat. No. 4,416,641 to Spinoso et al. ("Spinoso"). Claims 1 and 2 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and this rejection is therefore moot.

Claims 9, 10, 13 and 22

Claims 9, 10, 13 and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Japanese Pat. Pub. No. JP 2001-233289 in view of Spinoso and further in view of U.S. Pat. No. 4,194,257 to Martin et al. ("Martin"). Claims 9, 10, 13 and 22 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and this rejection is therefore moot.

Claims 5-7

Claims 5-7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Japanese Pat. Pub. No. JP 2001-233289 in view of Spinoso and further in view of U.S.

Pat. No. 6,066,017 to Max et al. ("Max"). Claims 5-7 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and this rejection is therefore moot.

Claims 20, 21 and 23-25

Claims 20, 21 and 23-25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 1,950,937 to Brown ("Brown") in view of Japanese Pat. Pub. No. JP 2001-233289. Claims 20, 21 and 23-25 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and this rejection is therefore moot.

Claim 26

Claim 26 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Brown in view of Japanese Pat. Pub. No. JP 2001-233289. Claim 26 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and this rejection is therefore moot.

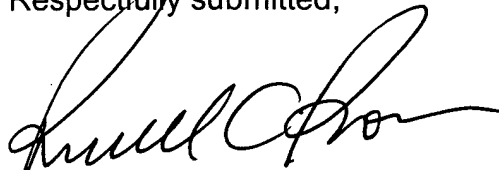
Conclusion

It is believed that all matters set forth in the present Office action have been addressed. Applicants have made a diligent effort to advance the prosecution of this application by canceling claims 1-3, 5-7, 9, 10, 13 and 20-26 and amending claims 4, 8, 11, 14 and 15.

In view of all of the above, the allowance of claims 4, 8, 11, 12 and 14-19 is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number if a telephone conference would expedite or aid the prosecution and examination of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randall C. Brown", written over the typed name.

Randall C. Brown
Registration No. 31,213

Dated: 3/17/05

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